

S E R M O N

O N

The Present Situation

AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

Preached in CHRIST CHURCH,

JUNE 23, 1775.

At the Request of the OFFICERS of the THIRD
BATTALION of the City of *Philadelphia*,
and district of *Southwark*.

BY WILLIAM SMITH, D. D.
PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE IN THAT CITY.

— P H I L A D E L P H I A : —

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Philadelphia, June 25, 1775.

AT a Meeting of the Officers of the 3d Battalion, of the City of Philadelphia and district of Southwark—agreed that Dr. SMITH be thanked for his excellent Sermon, preached at their Request the 23d Instant; and that he be requested to furnish a Copy of the same for Publication; as, in their opinion, it will promote the Cause of Liberty and Virtue.

Signed by Order,

JOHN CADWALADER, COLONEL.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Sermon was drawn up on a few days notice, and without any view to the press, at the request of some of the Author's worthy Friends, to whom he could refuse nothing of this kind. At their request, it is now likewise submitted to the Public, as it was preached, without varying or suppressing a single sentiment or material expression; and with the addition only of a few lines, and three or four explanatory notes.

THE Author considered that, although he was called to this office by a particular body, yet he was to address a great and mixt assembly of his fellow-citizens, and a number of the first characters in America, now met in consultation, at a most alarming crisis.

ANIMATED with the purest zeal for the mutual interests of Great-Britain and the Colonies; ardently panting for the return of those Halcyon-days of harmony, during which both countries so long flourished together, as the glory and wonder of the world; he thought it his duty, with the utmost impartiality, to

attempt a state of the unhappy controversy that now rends the Empire in pieces; and to shew, if peradventure he might be permitted to vouch for his Fellow-Citizens, so far as he has been conversant among them, that the idea of an independence upon the Parent-Country, or the least licentious opposition to its just interests, is utterly foreign to their thoughts; that they contend only for the sanctity of Charters and Laws, together with the right of granting their own Money; and that our rightful Sovereign has no where more loyal subjects, or more zealously attached to those principles of Government, under which his Family inherits the Throne.

THESE, with a few things which seemed necessary respecting the church at this time, are the topics handled in the following Sermon. If the principles it contains are but thoroughly *felt*, the Reader will not regret that the limits of a single discourse would not allow a particular application of them. They will lead to their own application; or, at least that field is left open to succeeding Preachers.

UPON the whole, if the kind expectations of the Author's Friends can be in any degree answered: if what he has delivered shall tend "to promote the *Cause of Liberty and Virtue*;"
and

and particularly, if it could find its way to the closets, or rather the hearts, of the *Great*, and (after all the arguments they have heard from others) could in the least induce them to juster and more benevolent sentiments concerning their American brethren—he would account it among the happiest circumstances of his life.

ENOUGH has surely been attempted, by way of experiment, to be convinced that the people of this country know their rights, and will not consent to a *passive* surrender of them. —It is, now at least, time to pursue another mode, and to listen to some plan for averting the dreadful calamities which must attend a hostile prosecution of this unnatural Contest. The Author's wishes for the accomplishment of such a plan, have been so frequently expressed, as to subject them perhaps to suspicions which he would not wish to merit, either here or else where. But still, if he could see it take place, upon a just and permanent foundation, he would be content, if it were required, to sing his "*nunc dimittis*," and to take a final leave of earthly concerns.

S E R M O N, &c.

JOSHUA xxii. 22

*The Lord God of gods—the Lord God of gods—
He knoweth, and Israel he shall know—if
it be in Rebellion or in Transgression against
the Lord—Save us not this Day.*

THESE words, my Brethren will lead us into a train of reflections, wholly suitable to the design of our present meeting; and I must beg your indulgence till I explain, as briefly as possible, the solemn occasion on which they were first delivered; hoping the application I may afterwards make of them, may fully reward your attention.

THE two tribes of Reuben and of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, had chosen their inheritance, on the Eastern side of Jordan, opposite to the other tribes of Israel. And although they knew that this situation would deprive them of some privileges which remained with their brethren on the other side, and particularly

particularly that great privilege of having the place of the Altar and Tabernacle of God among them; yet, as the land of Canaan was judged too small for all the twelve tribes, they were contented with the possession they had chosen. And thus they spoke to Moses—

“ It is a land of cattle, and thy servants have much cattle. Wherefore, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given to us for a possession, and we will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones; and we ourselves will go ready armed before our brethren, the children of Israel,—and will not return into our houses, until they have inherited every man his inheritance.”—

“ AND Moses said unto them—If you will do this thing, and will go all of you armed over Jordan before the Lord, until he have driven out his enemies from before him; and the land (of Canaan) be subdued (for your brethren) then afterwards ye shall return, and this land (of Gilead) shall be your possession before the Lord.”

THIS; then, was the great original contract, under which these two tribes and a half were allowed to separate from the rest, and to dwell on the other side of Jordan. They were to assist their brethren in their necessary wars, and to continue under one Government with them—even that of the great Jehovah himself—erecting no separate altar, but coming to perform their sacrifices at that one Altar of SHILON, where the Lord had vouchsafed to promise his special presence.

THOUGH this subjected them to inconveniences, yet as Uniformity of Worship and the Nature of their Theocracy required it, they adhered faithfully to their contract.

IN the fear of God, they bowed themselves at his altar, although not placed in their own land; and, in love to their brethren, they supported them in their wars, “ till there stood

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" stood not a man of all their enemies before them ;" and at last, JOSHUA, their great leader, having no farther need of their assistance, gave them this noble testimony— That they had in all things obeyed his voice as their general, and faithfully performed all that they had promised to Moses the servant of God. Wherefore, he blessed them, and dismissed them to return to their own land " with " much riches, and with cattle, and with silver, and with " gold, and with much raiment."

No sooner, therefore, had they entered their own country, than in the fullness of gratitude, on the banks of Jordan, at the common passage, over against Canaan, they built an *high* or *great Altar*, that it might remain an eternal monument of their being of one stock, and entitled to the same civil and religious privileges, with their brethren of the other tribes,

BUT this their work of piety and love was directly misconstrued. The cry was immediately raised against them. The zealots of that day scrupled not to declare them *Rebels* against the living God, violators of his sacred laws and *Theocracy*, in setting up an altar against his holy altar ; and therefore the whole congregations of the brother-tribes, that dwelt in Canaan, gathered themselves together, to go up to war against their own flesh and blood ; in a blind transport of unrighteous zeal, purposing to extirpate them from the face of the earth, as enemies to God, and the common wealth of Israel!

IN that awful and important moment (and oh my God that the example could be copied among the brother-tribes of our Israel, in the Parent-Land) I say, in that awful and important moment, some milder and more benevolent men there were, whose zeal did not so far transport them ; but that before they unsheathed the sword to plunge it with unhallowed hand into the bowels of their brethren, they thought it justice first to enquire into the truth of the charge against them. And, for the glory of Israel, this peaceable and prudent council prevailed.

A MOST

A most solemn embassy was prepared, at the head of which was a man of sacred character, and venerable authority, breathing the dictates of religion and humanity; PHINEAS the son of Eleazer the high Priest, accompanied with ten other Chiefs or Princes, one from each of the nine tribes as well as from the remaining half tribe of Manasseh.

GREAT was the astonishment of the * Gileadites on receiving this embassy, and hearing the charge against them. But the power of conscious innocence is above all fear, and the language of an upright heart superior to all eloquence. By a solemn appeal to Heaven for the rectitude of their intentions, unpremeditated and vehement, in the words of my text, they disarmed their brethren of every suspicion.

"THE Lord God of gods," say they (in the fervency of truth, repeating the invocation) "the Lord God of gods,"—He that made the heavens and the earth, who searcheth the hearts, and is acquainted with the most secret thoughts of all men—"He knoweth, and all Israel shall know," by our unshaken constancy in the religion of our fathers—that this charge against us is utterly false.

THEN turning from their brethren, with unspeakable dignity of soul and clearness of conscience, they address the almighty Jehovah himself—

OH thou sovereign Ruler of the universe—our God and our Fathers God—if it be in rebellion or in transgression against thee, that we have raised this monument of our zeal for the common wealth of Israel—SAVE US NOT THIS DAY! If the most distant thought has entered our hearts of erecting an *independent altar*; if we have sought in one instance, to derogate from the glory of that sacred Altar which thou hast placed among our brethren beyond Jordan, as the common bond of union and

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worship

* The two tribes and a half are here briefly and generally denominated *Gileadites* from the name of the land they had chosen.

worship among all the tribes of Israel—let not this day's sun descend upon us, till thou hast made us a monument of thine avenging justice, in the sight of the surrounding world!

AFTER this astonishing appeal to the great God of Heaven and Earth, they proceed to reason with their brethren; and tell them that so far from intending a separation, either in government or religion, this altar was built with a direct contrary purpose—"That it might be a WITNESS between us and you, and our generations after us; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, ye have no part in the Lord." We were afraid lest in some future age, when our posterity may cross Jordan to offer sacrifices in the place appointed, your posterity may trust them from the altar; and tell them, that because they live not in the land where the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, they are none of his people, nor intitled to the Jewish privileges.

BUT while this altar stands, they shall always have an answer ready. They will be able to say—"Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made." If our fathers had not been of the seed of Israel, they would not have fondly copied your customs and models. You would not have beheld in *Gilead*, an altar, in all things an imitation of the true altar of God, which is in *Shiloh*; except only that ours is an high "or great altar" to see" from far. And this may convince you that it was not intended as an altar of sacrifice (for then it would have been but three cubits in height, as our law directs) but as a monumental altar, to instruct our generations for ever, that they are of the same pedigree with yourselves, and entitled to the same civil and religious privileges.

THIS noble defence wrought an immediate reconciliation among the discordant tribes. "The words (when reported) pleased the children of Israel—they blessed God together" for preventing the effusion of kindred blood, "and did
" not

" not go up to destroy the land where their brethren the
 " children of Reuben * and Gad, dwell.

THE whole History of the Bible cannot furnish a passage more instructive than this, to the members of a great empire, whose dreadful misfortune it is to have the evil Demon of civil or religious *discord* gone forth among them. And would to God, that the application I am now to make of it could be delivered in accents louder than thunder, till they have pierced the ear of every Briton; and especially their ears who have meditated war and destruction against their brother-tribes of Reuben and Gad, in this our *American Gilead*. And led me add—would to God too that we who this day consider ourselves in the place of those tribes, may, like them, be still able to lay our hands on our hearts in a solemn appeal to the God of gods, for the rectitude of our intentions towards the *whole* common-wealth of our BRITISH ISRAEL. For, called to this sacred place, on this great occasion, I know it is your wish that I should stand superior to all *partial motives*, and be found alike unbiassed by favor or by fear. And happy it is that the parallel, now to be drawn, requires not the least sacrifice either of truth or virtue!

LIKE the tribes of Reuben and Gad, we have chosen our inheritance in a land separated from that of our fathers and brethren, not indeed by a small river, but an immense ocean. This inheritance we likewise hold by a plain *original contract*, entitling us to all the natural and improveable advantages of our situation, and to a community of privileges with our brethren, in every civil and religious respect; except in this, that the throne or seat of Empire, that great altar at which the men of this world bow, was to remain among them.

REGARDLESS

* Though for brevity, the sacred text, in this and other places, only mentions *Reuben* and *Gad*, yet the half tribe of *Manasseh* is also supposed to be included.

REGARDLESS of this local inconvenience, uncankered by jealousy, undepressed by fear, and cemented by mutual love and mutual benefits, we trod the path of glory with our brethren for an hundred years and more—enjoying a length of felicity scarce ever experienced by any other people. Mindful of the hands that protected us in our youth, and submitting to every just regulation for appropriating to them the benefit of our trade—our wealth was poured in upon them from ten thousand channels, widening as they flowed, and making their poor to sing, and industry to smile; through every corner of their land. And as often as dangers threatened, and the voice of the British Israel called our brethren to the field, we left them not alone, but shared their toils, and fought by their side, “till there stood not a man of all their enemies before them.” Nay, they themselves testified on our behalf, that in all things we not only did our part, but more than our part for the common good, and they dismissed us home loaded with silver and with gold,* in recompence for our extraordinary services.

So far you see the parallel holds good. But what *big altars* have we built to alarm our British Israel; and why have the congregations of our brethren gathered themselves together against us? Why do their embattled hosts already cover our plains? Will they not examine our case, and listen to our plea?

“THE Lord God of gods—he knows” and the whole surrounding world shall yet know, that whatever *American altars* we have built, far from intending to dishonour, have been raised with an exalted view to perpetuate the name and glory of that sacred altar, and seat of empire and liberty, which we left behind us, and wish to remain eternal, among our brethren, in the parent land!

ESTERMINING

* The parliamentary reimbursements for our exertions in the late war; similar to what Joshua gave the two tribes and a half on the close of his wars.

ESTEEMING our relation to them our greatest felicity; adoring the Providence that gave us the same progenitors; glorying in this, that when the *new-world* was to be portioned out among the kingdoms of the *old*, the most important part of this continent fell to the sons of a protestant and free nation; desirous of worshipping for ever at the same altar with them; fond of their manners, even to excess; enthusiasts to that sacred plan of civil and religious happiness, for the preservation of which they have sacrificed from age to age; maintaining, and always ready to maintain, at the risque of every thing that is dear to us, the most unshaken fidelity to our common Sovereign, as the great center of our union, and guardian of our mutual rights:—I say, with these principles and these views, we thought it our duty, to build up American altars, or *constitutions*, as nearly as we could, upon the great British model.

HAVING never sold our birth-right, we considered ourselves entitled to the privileges of our father's house —“to enjoy peace, liberty and safety;” to be governed, like our brethern, by our own laws, in all matters properly affecting ourselves, and to offer up our own sacrifices at the altar of British empire; contending that a forced devotion is idolatry, and that no power on earth has a right to come in between us and a gracious Sovereign, to measure forth our loyalty, or to grant our property, *without our consent*.

THESE are the principles we inherited from Britons themselves. Could we depart from them, we should be deemed bastards and not sons, aliens and not brethern.

THE altars therefore which we have built, are not high or rival altars to create jealousy, but humble monuments

* In this respect, our plea, is even stronger than that of the two tribes and an half. For, till an ex-

monuments of our union and love: intended to bring millions yet unborn, from every corner of this vast continent, to bend at the great parent-altar of British liberty; venerating the country from which they sprung, and pouring their gifts into her lap when their countless thousands shall far exceed hers.

It was our wish that there should be an eternal "Witness between our brethren and us;" that if at any future period, amid the shifting scenes of human interests and human affections, their children should say to our children—"Ye have no portion" in the birth-right of Britons, and to seek to push them from the common shrine of Freedom, when they come to pay their homage there; they might always have an answer ready—"Behold the pattern of the altar which our fathers built." Behold your own religious and civil institutions, and then examine the frames of government and system of laws raised by our fathers in every part of America! Could these have been such exact copies of your own, if they had not inherited the same spirit, and sprung from the same stock, with yourselves.

Thus far you see the parallel yet holds good, and I think cannot be called a perversion of my text; if you will allow that the supreme power of an empire, whether theocratical, monarchical, or howsoever distributed, may be represented under the figure of *one* common altar, at which the just devotion of all the subjects is to be paid.

BUT

planation was given, the *height* of their altar, like those of the Heathen, who loved to sacrifice on lofty places, might create a suspicion of their "lapsing" into idolatry; either intending to worship other "gods, or the God of Israel in an unlawful place and manner."

Bp. PATRICK.

BUT it is said that we have of late departed from our former line of duty, and *refused* our homage at the great altar of British empire. And to this it has been replied, that the very *refusal* is the strongest evidence of our veneration for the altar itself. Nay, it is contended by those charged with this breach of devotion, that when in the shape of unconstitutional exactions, violated rights and mutilated charters, they were called to worship idols, instead of the true divinity, it was in a transport of holy jealousy, that they dashed them to pieces, or whelmed them to the bottom of the ocean.

THIS is, in brief, the state of the argument on each side. And hence, at this dreadful moment, ancient friends and brethren stand prepared for events of the most tragic nature.

HERE the weight of my subject almost overcomes me; but think not that I am going to damp that noble ardor which at this instant, glows in every bosom present. Nevertheless, as from an early acquaintance with many of you, I know that your principles are pure, and your humanity only equal'd by your transcendent love of your country; I am sure you will indulge the passing tear, which a preacher of the Gospel of Love must now shed over the scenes that lie before us—Great and deep distress about to pervade every corner of our land! millions to be called from their peaceful labors by “the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war! Garments rolled in blood,” and even victory itself only yielding an occasion to weep over friends and relatives slain! These are melancholy prospects; and therefore you will feel with me the difficulties I now labor under—forsaken by my text, and left to lament alone that, in the Parent-land, no PHINEHAS has prevailed; no Embassy* of great or good

* It is acknowledged with gratitude that many great and exalted characters have pled the cause of America;

good men has been raised, to stay the sword of destruction, to examine into the truth of our case, and save the effusion of kindred blood. I am left to lament that, in this sad instance, *Jewish* tenderness has put *Christain* benevolence to shame.

“ Our Brethern, the house of our Fathers, even
 “ they have called a multitude against us. Had an
 “ enemy thus reproached us, then perhaps we might
 “ have borne it. But it was you, Men our equals,
 “ our guides, our acquaintance, with whom we took
 “ sweet council and walked together into the house of
 “ God.” Or had it been for any essential benefit to
 the Common-wealth at large, we would have laid our
 hands on our mouths, and bowed obedience with our
 usual silence. But for DIGNITY and SUPREMACY !
 What are they when set in opposition to common utility,
 common justice, and the whole faith and spirit of
 the Constitution ? True Dignity is to govern Freemen,
 not Slaves : and true Supremacy is to excel in doing
 Good.

It is time, and indeed more than time, for a great
 and enlightened people to make *names* bend to *things*,
 and *ideal honor* to *practical safety* ? Precedents and indefinite
 claims are surely things too nugatory to convulse
 a mighty empire. Is there no wisdom, no great and
 liberal plan of policy to re-unite its members, as the
 sole bulwark of liberty and protestantism ; rather than
 by their deadly strife to encrease the importance of
 those

and previous to all coercive measures, advised an enquiry
 or hearing, similar to that for which *Pbincas* was appointed.
 What is here lamented, and will be long
 lamented, is that this council could not take place.
 If brethren could come together in such a temper as
 this, the issue could not fail to be for their mutual glory
 and mutual happiness.

those states that are foes to freedom, truth and humanity? To devise such a plan, and to behold British Colonies spreading over this immense Continent, rejoicing in the common-rights of Freemen, and imitating the parent-state in every excellence—is more glory than to hold lawless dominion over all the nations on the face of the earth!

BUT I will weary you no longer with fruitless lamentations concerning things that *might be* done. The question now is—since they are not done, must we tamely surrender any part of our birth-right, or of that great charter of privileges, which we not only claim by inheritance, but by the express terms of our colonization, I say, *God forbid!* For here, in particular, I wish to speak so plain that neither my own principles, nor those of the church to which I belong, may be misunderstood.

ALTHOUGH, in the beginning of this great contest, we thought it not our duty to be forward in widening the breach, or spreading discontent; although it be our fervent desire to heal the wounds of the public, and to shew by our temper that we seek not to distress, but to give the parent-state an opportunity of saving themselves, and saving us before it be too late; nevertheless, as we know that our civil and religious rights are linked together in one indissoluble bond, we neither have, nor seek to have, any interest separate from that of our country; nor can we advise a desertion of its cause. Religion and liberty must flourish or fall together in America. We pray that both may be perpetual.

A continued submission to violence is no tenet of our church. When her brightest luminaries, near a century past, were called to propagate the court doctrine of a *dispensing Power, above Law*—did they treacherously cry—“*Peace, Peace,*” when there was no *Peace!* Did they not magnanimously set their foot upon the line of the constitution, and tell Majesty to its face that “they could not betray the public liberty,” and that the Monarch’s only safety consisted “in governing

verning according to the laws?" Did not their example, and consequent sufferings, kindle a flame that illuminated the land, and introduced that noble system of public and personal liberty, secured by the revolution? Since that period, have not the avowed principles of our greatest divines been against raising the *Church* above the *State*; jealous of the national rights, resolute for the *protestant* succession, favourable to the *reformed* religion, and desirous to maintain the faith of *Toleration*? If exceptions have happened, let no society of Christians stand answerable for the deviations, or corruptions, of individuals.

THE doctrine of absolute NON-RESISTANCE has been fully exploded among every virtuous people. The free-born soul revolts against it, and must have been long debased, and have drank in the last dregs of corruption, before it can brook the idea "that a whole people injured may, in no case, recognize their trampled Majesty." But to draw the line, and say where submission ends and resistance begins, is not the province of the ministers of Christ, who has given no rule in this matter, but left it to the feelings and consciences of the injured. For when pressures and sufferings come, when the weight of power grows intolerable, a people will fly to the constitution for shelter, and, if able, will resume that power which they never surrendered, except so far as it might be exercised for the

* The Author, in a sermon first published 20 years ago, on 1 Peter ii, 17 delivered his sentiments fully on this point—in the following words, viz.—"It would be absurd to argue as some have done, that the apostle here meant to enjoin a *continued submission* to violence.—The love of mankind, and the fear of God, those very principles from which we trace the divine original of just government, will lead us, by all probable means, to resist every attempt to

the common safety. Pulpit-casuistry is too feeble to direct or controul here. God in his own government of the world, never violates freedom; and his scriptures themselves would be disregarded, or considered as perverted, if brought to belie his voice, speaking in the hearts of men.

THE application of these principles, my brethren, is now easy, and must be left to your own consciences and feelings. You are now engaged in one of the grandest struggles to which freemen can be called. You are contending for what you conceived to be your constitutional rights, and for a final settlement of the terms upon which this country may be perpetually reunited to the parent-state.

Look back, therefore with reverence look back to the times of ancient virtue and renown. Look back to the mighty purposes which your fathers had in view when they traversed a vast ocean and planted this land. Recal to your minds their labours, their toils and perseverance, and let their divine spirit animate you in all your actions.

Look forward also to distant posterity. Figure to yourselves millions and millions to spring from your loins, who may be born *freemen* or *slaves*, as Heaven shall now approve or reject your counsels. Think that on you it may depend whether this great country, in
ages

enslave the free-born soul, and oppose the righteous will of God by defeating the happiness of men. Resistance, however, is to be a last resource, and none but the majority of a whole people, can determine in what cases it is necessary. In the Scriptures, therefore, obedience is rightly inculcated in general terms. For a people may sometimes imagine grievances they do not feel, but will never miss to feel and complain of them where they really are, unless their minds have been gradually prepared for slavery by absurd tenets."

ages hence, shall be filled and adorned with a virtuous and enlightened people; enjoying LIBERTY and all its concomitant blessings, together with the RELIGION of JESUS, as it flows uncorrupted from his holy oracles; or covered with a race of men more contemptible than the savages that roam the wilderness, because they once knew the "things which belonged to their "happiness and peace, but suffered them to be hid "from their eyes."

AND while you thus look *back* to the *past*, and *forward* to the future, fail not, I beseech you, to *look up* to "the God of gods—the Rock of your Salvation. As the clay in the potter's hands," so are the nations of the earth in the hands of him, the everlasting JAHOVAH! He lifteth up—and he casteth down—"He resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble"—He will keep the feet of his saints—the wicked "shall be silent in darkness, and by strength shall no "man prevail."

THE bright prospect of the Gospel; a thorough veneration of the Saviour of the world; a conscientious obedience to his divine laws; faith in his promises; and the steadfast hope of immortal life through him; these only can support a man in all times of adversity as well as prosperity. You might more easily "strike fire out of ice," than stability or magnanimity out of crimes. But the good man, he who is at peace with the God of all peace, will know no fear but that of offending him, whose hand can cover the righteous "so that he needs not fear the arrow that flieth by day, nor the destruction that wasteth at noon-day; "for a thousand shall fall beside him, and ten thousand at his right hand, but it shall not come nigh "to him; for he shall give his angels charge over him "to keep him in all his ways."

ON the omnipotent God, therefore, through his blessed Son, let your strong confidence be placed; but do

do not vainly expect that every day will be to you a day of prosperity or triumph. The ways of Providence lie through mazes, too intricate for human penetration. Mercies may often be held forth to us in the shape of sufferings; and the vicissitudes of our fortune in building up this American fabrick of happiness and glory may be various and chequered.

BUT let not this discourage you. Yea rather let it animate you with a holy *fervor*—a divine *enthusiasm*—ever persuading yourselves that the cause of *virtue* and *Freedom* is the CAUSE of GOD upon earth; and that the whole theatre of human nature does not exhibit a more august spectacle than a number of Freemen, in dependence upon Heaven, mutually binding themselves to encounter every difficulty and danger in support of their native and constitutional rights, and for transmitting them holy and unviolated to their posterity.

It was this principle that inspired the heroes of ancient times; that raised their names to the summit of renown, and filled all succeeding ages with their unspotted praise. It is this principle too that must animate your conduct, if you wish your names to reach future generations, conspicuous in the roll of glory; and so far as this principle leads you, be prepared to follow—whether to life or to death.

WHILE you profess yourselves contending for Liberty, let it be with the temper and dignity of freemen undaunted and firm, but without wrath or vengeance, so far as grace may be obtained to assist the weakness of nature. Consider it as a happy circumstance, if such a struggle must have happened, that God hath been pleased to postpone it to a period, when our country is adorned with men of enlightened zeal; when the arts and sciences are planted among us to secure a succession of such men; when our morals are not far tainted by luxury, profusion, or dissipation; when the principles that withstood oppression, in the brightest æra of the
English

English history, are ours as it were by peculiar inheritance; and when we stand upon our own ground, with all that is dear around us, animating us to every patriotic exertion. Under such circumstances and upon such principles, what wonders, what achievements of true glory, have not been performed!

For my part, I have long been possessed with a strong and even enthusiastic persuasion, that Heaven has great and gracious purposes towards this continent which no human power or human device shall be able finally to frustrate. Illiberal or mistaken plans of policy may distress us for a while, and perhaps sorely check our growth; but if we maintain our own virtue; if we cultivate the spirit of Liberty among our children; if we guard against the snares of luxury, venality and corruption; the GENIUS of AMERICA will still rise triumphant, and that with a power at last too mighty for opposition. This country *will be free*—nay, for ages to come, a chosen seat of *Freedom, Arts, and Heavenly Knowledge*; which are now either drooping or dead in most countries of the old world.

To conclude, since the *strength* of all public bodies, under God, consists in their UNION; bear with each others infirmities, and even varieties of sentiments, in things not essential to the main point. The tempers of men are cast in various moulds. Some are quick and *feelingly alive* in all their mental operations, especially those which relate to their country's weal, and are therefore ready to burst forth into flame upon every alarm. Others again, with intentions alike pure, and a clear unquenchable love of their country, too steadfast to be damp't by the mists of prejudice, or worked up into conflagration by the rude blasts of passion, think it their duty to weigh consequences, and to deliberate fully upon the probable means of obtaining public ends. Both these kinds of men should bear with each other; for both are friends to their country.

One thing further let me add, that without *order* and just *subordination* there can be no *union* in public bodies. However much you may be equal on other occasions, yet all this must cease in an united and associated capacity; and every individual is bound to keep the place and duty assigned to him, by ties far more powerful over a man of virtue and honour, than all the other ties which human policy can contrive. It had been better never to have lifted a voice in your country's cause, than to betray it by want of *Union*; or to leave worthy men, who have embarked their all for the common good, to suffer, or stand unassisted.

LASTLY, by every method in your power, and in every possible case, support the LAWS of your country. In a contest for liberty, think what a crime it would be, to suffer one *Freeman* to be insulted, or wantonly injured in his liberty, so far as by your means it may be prevented.

THUS animated and thus acting—we may then SING with the prophet—

“ FEAR not, O land! be glad and rejoice, for the
 “ Lord will do great things. Be not afraid ye beasts of
 “ the field, for the pastures of the wilderness do spring—
 “ The tree beareth her fruit—the fig-tree and the vine
 “ yield their fruit.”

THUS animated and thus acting—we may likewise PRAY with the prophet—

“ O LORD be gracious unto us—we have waited for
 “ thee. Be thou our arm every morning, our salvation also
 “ in time of trouble. Some trust in chariots and some in
 “ horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our
 “ God—O thou hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in
 “ time of need, thou art in the midst of us and we are
 “ called by thy name—LEAVE US NOT. Give us *one*
 “ heart and *one* way, that we may fear thee for ever, for
 “ the good of ourselves and our children after us—We
 “ looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of
 “ health, but behold we are in trouble—Yet will we trust
 “ in

“ in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is ever-
 “ lasting strength—He will yet bind up the broken heart-
 “ ed, and comfort those that mourn”—even so, oh our
 God do thou comfort and relieve them, that so the bones
 which thou hast broken may yet rejoice. Inspire us with
 a high and commanding sense of the value of our consti-
 tutional rights! may a spirit of wisdom and virtue be poured
 down upon us all; and may our representatives, those who
 are delegated to *devise* and appointed to *execute* public mea-
 sures, be directed to such, as thou in thy sovereign good-
 ness shalt be pleased to render effectual for the salvation
 of a great empire, and re-uniting all its members in one
 sacred bond of harmony and public happiness! Grant this,
 oh Father, for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake; to whom, with
 thee and the holy Spirit, one God, be Glory, Honour,
 and Power, now and for ever! AMEN,



F I N I S.

AR Smith May 20 1879 x Δ v